

R E M A R K S

Claim 1 and 4-11 are pending in the present application.

Allowable Claims 1 and 4-12

Since claims 2, 5 and 9 were indicated to be in allowable form, and since claim 2 has been incorporated into claim 1, all of claims 1 and 4-11 have been placed into allowable form. Note that all of claims 4-11 depend from allowable claim 1.

Removal of Issues Under 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

Claims 1, 4, 6-8 and 10-12 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yoshimasa '791 (JP 06-327791) in view of Egashira '227 (USP 5,439,227).

The above-noted rejection has been rendered moot and should be withdrawn in view of the incorporation of allowable claim 2 into claim 1.

Removal of Double Patenting Rejection

Claims 1 and 12 have been "provisionally" rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claim 1 of co-pending Application Serial No. 09/854,693.

The above-noted double patenting rejection has been removed in view of the incorporation of claim 2 into claim 1 and the cancellation of claim 12. Consequently, it is requested that this rejection be withdrawn.

Conclusion

In view of the above, it is submitted that all of the presently pending claims have been placed into allowable condition and it is requested that a Notice of Allowance issue in the near future.

If any questions arise regarding the above matters, please contact Applicant's representative, Andrew D. Meikle (Reg. No. 32,868), in the Washington Metropolitan Area at the phone number listed below.

Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.17 and 1.136(a), Applicant(s) respectfully petition(s) for a one (1) month extension of time for filing a reply in connection with the present application, and the required fee of \$110.00 is attached hereto.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees

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required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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